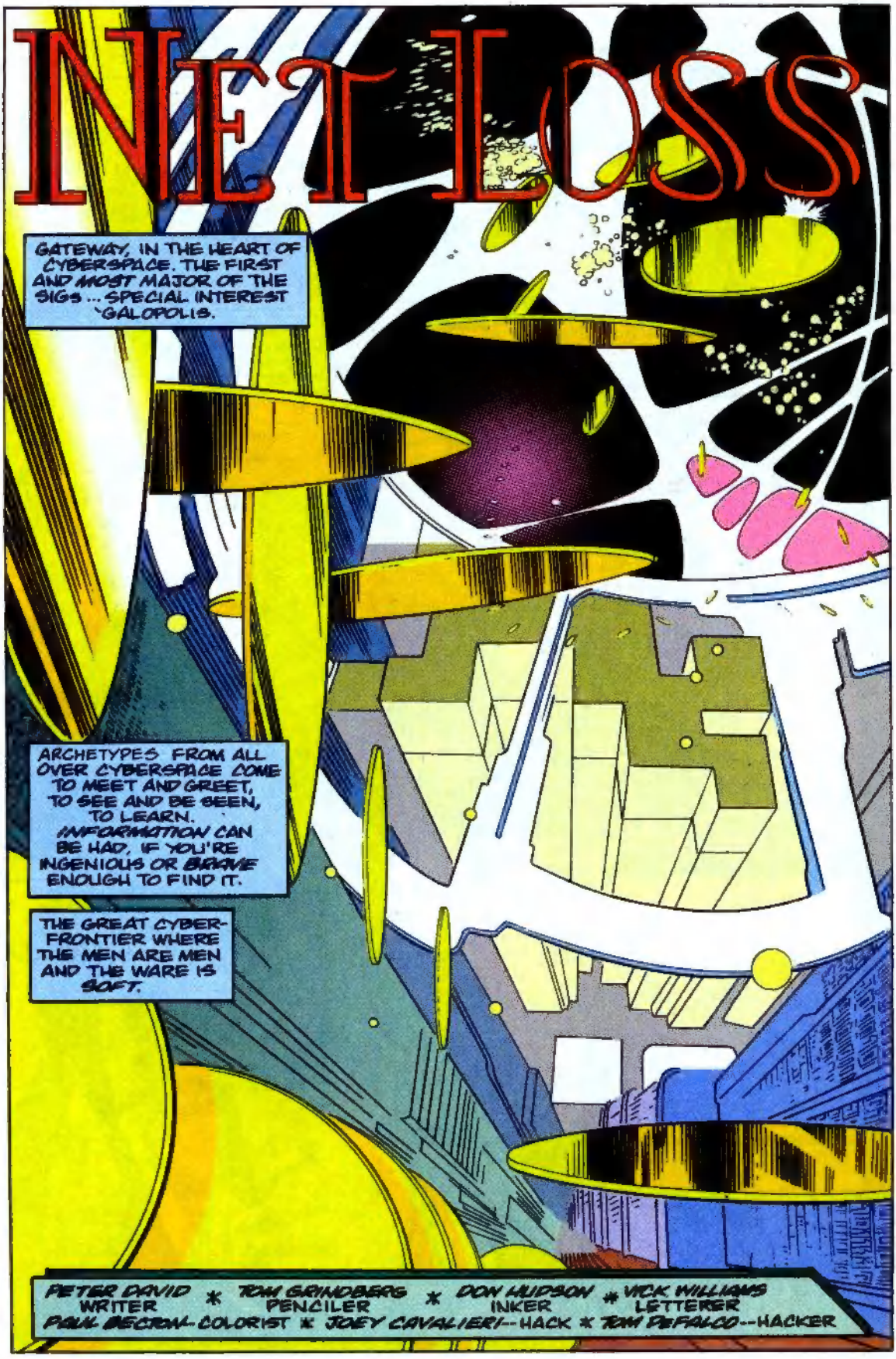
SHE GLIDES THROUGH THE DENIZENS OF HOLY ROW AS THEY CONVERGE ON ME...
I SHOVE THROUGH, JUST GLIMPSING HER PASSING THROUGH AN EXIT.
EXIT
I FOLLOW... BUT AM IN BLACKNESS.
SHE'S GONE. BACK TO THE REAL WORLD.
I TRY ENVISIONING HER, SO THAT MY PSIONIC TRACKING POWER WILL CARRY ME TO HER. BUT NOTHING HAPPENS.
APPARENTLY, SINTILLA ...WHOEVER, WHEREVER SHE IS...HOLDS ANSWERS TO MY PAST AND, PERHAPS, FUTURE. I MUST HAVE THOSE ANSWERS.
AND AS THE MEMORY OF HER WARMTH SUFFUSES ME...I KNOW I MUST HAVE HER, AS WELL.
END


NET LOSS
GATEWAY, IN THE HEART OF CYBERSPACE. THE FIRST AND MOST MAJOR OF THE SIGS ... SPECIAL INTEREST GALOPOLIS.
ARCHETYPES FROM ALL OVER CYBERSPACE COME TO MEET AND GREET, TO SEE AND BE SEEN, TO LEARN. INFORMATION CAN BE HAD, IF YOU'RE INGENIOUS OR BRAVE ENOUGH TO FIND IT.
THE GREAT CYBER-FRONTIER WHERE THE MEN ARE MEN AND THE WARE IS SOFT.
PETER DAVID WRITER * TOM GRINDBERG PENCILER * DON HUDSON INKER * VICK WILLIAMS LETTERER
PAUL BECROM--COLORIST * JOEY CAVALIERI--HACK * TOM DEFALCO--HACKER

THE CENTERPIECE OF GATEWAY IS THE GLIDERDOME, THE CENTRAL MEETING PLACE..
...FOR THOSE IN THE KNOW, OR WISHING TO BE.
THE FIRST THING ONE ENCOUNTERS UPON ENTERING THE GLIDERDOME (NO MATTER FROM WHICH DIRECTION ONE ENTERS)...
...IS HOLY ROW, WHERE THE ZEALOTS GATHER TO SPREAD THEIR RESPECTIVE WORD.
IT IS A PLACE OF MILD INTEREST TO ME.
BUT IT QUICKLY BECOMES SECONDARY WHEN I HAPPEN TO NOTICE...HER.

SHE IS CLOTHED IN SADNESS AND NOT MUCH ELSE.
SHE BARELY AFFORDS ME A GLANCE AS SHE MOVES TO THE BAR. BUT I CANNOT TAKE MY EYES FROM HER.
100
SINTILLA...
YOU DIDN'T THINK YOU COULD RUN FOREVER, DID YOU?
YOU'RE COMING WITH ME, SIN. NOW.
SIR, I'M AN ASSISTANT SYSOP.
STOP HARASSING THIS WOMAN AT ON--
ROGER, IT'S OVER. LEAVE ME ALONE, OKAY?

AARRHHHRRR!!
FLAME WAR! SYSOPS! HELP!!
HALT! BEFORE YOU ARE PURGED FROM--
EEYAHH!!!
YOU THINK YOU CAN PURGE ME?!
I'VE MADE MODIFICATIONS! THIS ARCHETYPE IS UNPURGABLE!
PUT IT DOWN. NOW.
YOU'RE NOT A SYSTEMS OPERATOR. BUT, HEY...
...IF YOU WANNA COME OUT OF CYBERSPACE WITH A MAJOR BODY ACHE AND A TRASHED ARCHETYPE, THAT'S FINE.
HAPPY DOWNTIME, CLOWN.

HIS EYES QUIVER IN FEAR AS I EXTINGUISH HIS FLAMES AND START TOWARD HIM.
ASBESTOS UNDERWEAR? IS THAT IT?
THAT WON'T BE ENOUGH.
A SWORD... A SHIELD.. THESE SEEM FAMILIAR SOMEHOW.
THE LINK IS ELUSIVE, AND MOMENTARILY DISTRACTS ME.
NOT THAT IT MATTERS.
HUH??

OKAY, BUDDY! YOU'RE GOOD!
THINK YOU CAN PROTECT HER AGAINST A SURGE?
A WHAT?
A SURGE! IT'S AN ILLEGAL PROGRAM!
FRIES THE BRAIN AT THE POINT OF ORIGIN!
D.. don't LET him...
I WON'T.
HIS SCREAM IS A JOYOUS THING.

SINTILLA...!
FORGET HER. SHE IS NO LONGER YOUR PROBLEM.
YOUR WEAPONS WERE DESIGNED TO WORK AGAINST ARCHE-TYPES. COMPUTER-GENERATED REPRESENTATIVES. I, HOWEVER, AM REAL.
IMPOSSIBLE!
NO. I GO WHERE I WISH.
AND I MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE.
OH, BY THE WAY.. AS I SLICE YOU TO PIECES HERE... SO, TOO, ARE YOU BEING DISMEMBERED IN THE REAL WORLD. FOR SUCH IS THE PUNISHMENT THAT I, THE NET PROPHET, HAVE DECREED.

HHKKK!
WUUFFF!
OHHHH BOY. THAT WAS A ROUGH SESSION.
BUT I KNEW HE WAS BLUFFING ABOUT HURTING ME IN REAL LI--
WAS I?

NOOO OOO
WH... WHERE DID HE GO?
I PUT HIM INTO A RECURSIVE LOOP. I'LL LET HIM OUT... SOONER OR LATER.
BEFORE I CAN SAY ANOTHER WORD, SHE PRESSES HERSELF AGAINST ME.
FROM THE MOMENT WE MAKE CONTACT, IMAGES, MEMORIES START TO FLOOD THROUGH ME.
AND THEN... THEY'RE GONE.